

Brooklyn Jewish Center Review

January 1956

SYNAGOGUES OF AMERICA AND ISRAEL

By

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ARYEH NEWMAN
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THE GRANDMOTHER

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HARRY E. WEDECK

ISRAEL IN THE FAMILY OF NATIONS

AN EDITORIAL

By

WILLIAM I. SIEGEL



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ISRAEL IN THE FAMILY OF NATIONS

IF THE United Nations is, as is claimed by its supporters, a family of nations, then has Israel indeed been relegated to the hard and unenviable status of a step-child in the family.

But moments before this writing, the United Nations Security Council unanimously condemned Israel for an attack upon a Syrian outpost on the Sea of Galilee. The resolution itself was actually only a recording of a foregone conclusion whose underlying motives had been foreshadowed by weeks of debate.

Neither the nations of the East nor of the West are free of guilt in the premises. The support of Syria by the Soviets and their satellites comes from a tainted source, and the advocacy of the resolution by the United States, Britain and France, is only slightly, if at all, more pure.

The record is replete with instances of Arab aggression upon Israel and with examples of major violations of international law by Arab nations. One example should suffice to make the point. In complete violation of the international statutes governing the use of the Suez Canal, Egypt forbids passage through the Canal of Israeli ships. Neither by demand of any individual member of the U.N., nor by resolution of the entire body has Egypt been compelled to desist from the practice.

On the score of bloodshed, the record is identical. The total number of Israeli lives lost in Arab forays across the border far exceeds the deaths suffered by the Syrians in the attack on a *military installation*, which has been accepted by the United Nations as the merely ostensible ground for the censure of Israel. There have been polite representations to the Arabs on these occasions; but never

has there been exhibited the synthetic indignation which has been heaped upon Israel in this last instance. The Arabs have indeed been well warranted in assuming that these gutless rebukes have been solely for the record, and without any intent whatever to implement them with effective means.

Russian support of the Arab cabal is of course not surprising. Any plan and any procedure which disturbs world peace is a tactic to be expected from the Soviets. It is less easy, however, to understand why the United States should follow suit. Every consideration of history, every real American interest, and every practical fact concerning the make-up of the Arab governments militates against the policy of our government. We should have learned by now that succumbing to blackmail never buys either friends or peace. The long, and weary, and bloody path trod by humanity since Munich should have taught this lesson over and over again. No consideration of supposed power politics should cause blood to run in order that oil may continue to flow.

It is, indeed, an unholy partnership in which America finds itself, to be aligned, even though not allied, with Russia. To condemn Russian sale of arms to Egypt with one breath, and with the next to censure Israel for legitimate self-defense, is anomalous conduct for a country whose principles should make it the champion of international democracy.

But in this world—this starkly realistic world—in which might does make right, Israel must bow to the fact that it must conform to the pressure of the resolution. This is a hard thing to say because it gives the sanction of assent, although

not the conviction of consent, to a determination which is wrong in principle, malicious in sponsorship and perhaps much more than merely mischievous in consequence. That the power of the United Nations has not been used in this instance for a proper purpose neither discounts nor negates the existence of that power. There can be very little doubt that the threat of sanctions would be readily transformed, and upon the very slightest of pretexts, into the *fact* of sanctions should anything similar to the Galilean episode re-occur.

It must therefore be said that Israel must stand ready to suffer provocation, almost to the last degree, without affirmative retaliation.

To say this, however, is but to emphasize the responsibility of the United Nations to bring about an actual peace between Israel and the Arabs in replacement of the too-long continued violent, and violated, armistice. A show of determination by the United Nations, addressed to the Arabs on this score, and equivalent to that manifested against Israel, could achieve a peace. It is idle to assert, and impossible to believe, that the non-Soviet world is without power to compel the making of a peace. Israel has given every evidence over the years of its eagerness to be a signatory and a faithful party to a peace settlement. The sole Arab contribution has been a cold and oft-reiterated refusal even to negotiate.

Let the United Nations become in fact and not merely in name a family of nations. Then will no nation need to be rebuffed, slighted or punished. Then can all nations be truly members of the family.

WILLIAM I. SIEGEL.

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"JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES"

"בֵּין־נוּ לְכֵן עַצְמֵינוּ"

An Intimate Chat Between Rabbi and Reader

POSTSCRIPT TO THE CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

A NUMBER of writers in the Yiddish and Hebrew press, during and after the Christmas holiday, discussed the tremendous increase in the Christological emphasis of Christmas and its influence on our own Jewish youth. At no time in the year is it made so clear to us that we are living in a Christian civilization as in the Christmas season. Legally, of course, America is not a Christian country. Citizens of all faiths enjoy equal rights and equal privileges. But actually this is a Christian country, since the vast majority of its citizens are Christians. We Jews represent a small minority of the American population. This fact alone presents a challenge to all of us Jews who are anxious to preserve and to hand down to our future generations our Jewish faith, our Jewish way of life.

Formerly—three or four decades ago—the Christmas holiday, with its religious emphasis, did not have the impact upon our youth that it has today. Our Christian neighbors went to their churches on the festival, they had Christmas trees and Christmas decorations in their homes; the stores displayed Christmas merchandise. But the Christmas spirit did not penetrate the Jewish home. Today, however, with the radio and the television, the Christmas message and the Christmas spirit have practically invaded the Jewish home. For weeks before and all through the holiday period, every program you tune in carries the Yule message, and often it emphasizes the purely religious aspects of the festival. Naturally, these programs must have some effect on the minds of our children, especially if they have no knowledge of their own religion and see no visible sign of their own Jewish ceremonials in their homes.

That is why the home today assumes a much greater and more important role than in years past if we are to counteract the Christmas influence in a positive way. Sending a child to a Jewish religious

school is, of course, very essential in giving him or her a good understanding of the beauties of his own faith. But important as that is, it is not enough. As soon as the child leaves the school, he is again under the influence of the Christian environment. And unless his knowledge is strengthened by the Jewish atmosphere in his home, he will not have the spiritual strength to resist the pressure of this environment, and the ties that bind him to his own faith will be weakened.

The Bible, in its own beautiful way, emphasizes this necessity for us. When the patriarch Jacob leaves his home in Canaan, accompanied by his children and their families, to become reunited with his son Joseph in Egypt, the Bible tells us that he sent one of his sons, Judah, to proceed before "to learn the way before him unto Goshen." The Rabbis were surprised at this action. What purpose could Jacob have had in mind? And they offer two answers: "To prepare, even before his arrival, a school where he could teach his children and where the tribe would come to learn." Jacob realized how important a Jewish education would be for his offspring, especially when they came in contact with the Egyptian civilization, and he did not want to lose a day in providing that essential instruction. But another rabbi adds: "He sent Judah to prepare for him beforehand a *bet dirab*, a home."

Surely, with a son, Joseph, the vice ruler in Egypt, Jacob had no need to worry lest he would not find a suitable home to live in when he arrived in Egypt. But knowing how strong an influence the new environment would exert upon his children, and knowing also how attractive the Egyptian civilization would be, he realized that in addition to the school in which his children would be taught he must provide them immediately with a home influence and home environment that would be distinctly Jewish and thus counteract the Egyptian atmosphere that would surround them.

This lesson of the patriarch Jacob we must take to heart. The problem is the same for us as it was for him. Happily, many parents today do realize the importance of the religious school, and the percentage of Jewish children attending classes has increased in very large measure. But, alas, many have not yet come to understand the importance of providing a Jewish home. And until they do, I am afraid that the school itself will be of little value. We must fill the home with Jewish ritual and ceremonial. On Hanukkah there should be as much preparation to enhance and to beautify the festival as is given by our Christian neighbors to the Christmas holiday. Merely a routine kindling of the lights is not enough. The Hanukkah lamp should be a beautiful one, and there are many very beautiful lamps now being imported from Israel. There should be family singing of Hanukkah melodies; the home should be decorated with Hanukkah symbols, and children should be given Hanukkah gifts not only once, but every night of the festival. The child should be made to look forward to this holiday and to be happy with it.

This procedure should be followed also on all the Jewish festivals, and especially in ushering in the Sabbath.

A Jewish home with such a Jewish atmosphere, together with a good schooling in a good religious school, will undoubtedly instill in the heart and mind of the Jewish child that spiritual strength which will enable him to withstand all the temptations of the Christian civilization which surrounds him, and above all to rejoice in the religious civilization that is his own.

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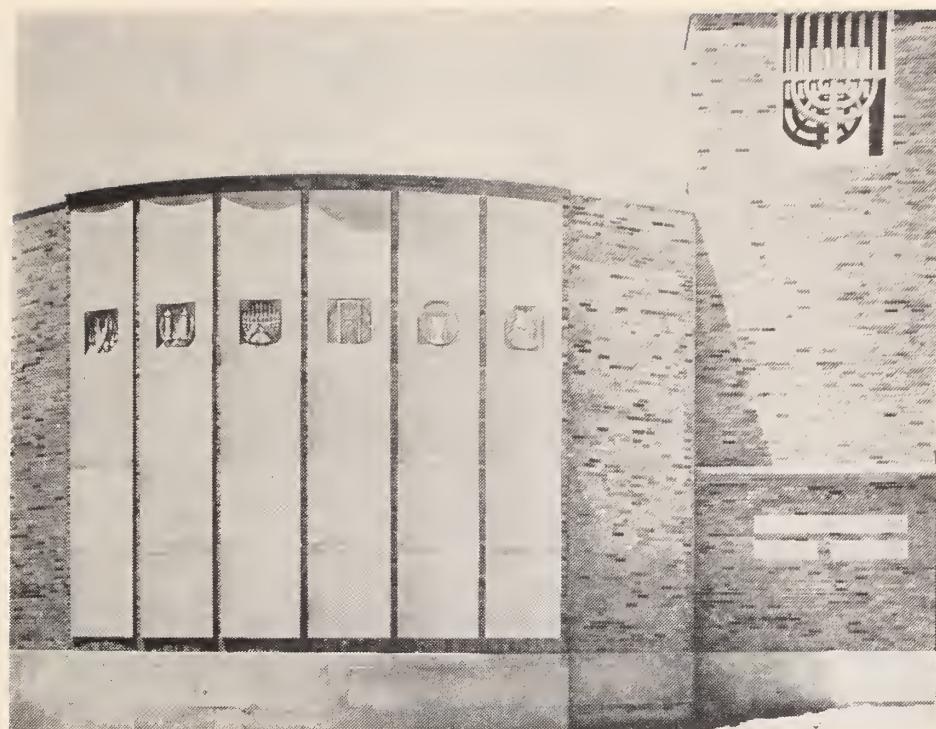
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TEMPLE EMANUEL
IN CLEVELAND

SYNAGOGUES OF AMERICA AND ISRAEL

By

ALFRED WERNER

ARYEH NEWMAN

NURA LASKY

AMONG the arts and skills of a people nothing is so expressive of the mood and spirit of the times as that of architecture. Particularly in sacred architecture, the architect articulates the deep, inner philosophy and character of a people as it is confronted by the eternal. After a decade of unprecedented increase in synagogue building in this country, we can take stock now of the meaning and direction of American synagogue architecture. Israel has not in the past years struck new designs in synagogue buildings, being preoccupied with economic and political survival.

The first feature of the architectural designs that draws our attention is that the American synagogue is conceived of, in the fullest sense of the words, as a Beth Am —A House of the People. The synagogue is a community center which provides facilities for worship, education and recreation. The second characteristic feature is its functionalism. The simplicity and austerity of its design derives from the American spirit of practicality and its all pervasive pragmatic philosophy.

In reading the articles in the pages that follow, one question may occur: is the mood and feeling of timelessness with which we approach faith and worship jarred by these contemporaneous designs, or do they help religion to keep in step with the times? It is left to the reader to judge and to answer.

BENJAMIN KREITMAN.

SYNAGOGUES OF AMERICA

THREE interesting items appeared in our newspapers in the second half of 1955.

Item No. 1: "The U. S. will have 70,000 new churches and synagogues costing \$6 billion in the next ten years. . . . In the same decade, 12,500 other church buildings will be built at a cost of more than a billion dollars."

Item No. 2: "Americans set a record in 1955 in philanthropic giving, contributing an estimated \$5,400,000,000—a sum more than triple that given in 1929's boom days, and far above 1922. . . . Where do these billions go? Religion gets well over half, 55%, leading by far. . . . During the post-war period there has been a phenomenal building boom in churches and religious edifices."

Item No. 3: "Can the massive Cathedral of St. John the Divine, begun about sixty-three years ago on New York's Morningside Heights, be completed in a contemporary style? . . . Finishing a cathedral in the idiom of the day is not new. . . . But can America's designers of apartment houses and airports compete spiritually with the builders of the past who placed stone on stone as a prayer?"

All faiths, all denominations, all areas of this country are witnessing the greatest church-building boom in our history. Within the last ten or twelve years hundreds, perhaps thousands, of temples and synagogues have been built in America, chiefly in suburban areas and almost exclusively in a style commonly known as "functional." It is a credit to builders and congregations alike that most of these edifices, while serving perfectly their immediate purposes, are also a delight to the eye of 20th century man. The new generation of rabbis and laymen have become accustomed to that magic rule of contemporary architecture, "Form follows function." Here and there, in the downtown sections of large cities, one will find old temples with facades, the Shields of David notwithstanding, that look either like Egyptian, Assyrian, or Moorish palaces, or like medieval Christian churches; most of these structures have been abandoned by their congregations in the move "uptown," and many a 19th century syn-

agogue is now occupied by Negro Christian worshippers.

Synagogue-building in the United States has a history of more than twenty decades. The first synagogue of Shearith Israel, North America's oldest Jewish congregation, was built in 1730. This Mill Street Synagogue, no longer to be seen, was located at the southern tip of Manhattan island, close to Wall Street. In this simple, unadorned building, about twenty-one feet high, and surrounded by a low, crude wooden fence, the city's entire Jewish population worshipped for almost a century. There was nothing about the facade to distinguish it from the other Colonial-style houses of the city.

Two centuries later in New York City the world's largest and most sumptuous

By ALFRED WERNER

Thousands of synagogues were built from the Atlantic to the Pacific by a Jewry that from the time of George Washington had grown from three thousand to well over four and a half million. But whereas the 18th century Sefardic synagogues—such as the one at Newport, Rhode Island—were "modern" in the sense that they were in perfect harmony with the Georgian architecture of their time, 19th and early 20th century Jewry produced quite a few temples that look rather "antiquated" (and always did).

No temples to speak of were built between the Wall Street crash and V-J Day. But in the last decade some of the world's most beautiful and most original modern synagogues have sprung up in the United

The famous old Touro Synagogue in Newport, consecrated in 1763. A park is now being planned to surround it.



ous synagogue was consecrated. Temple Emanu-El on Fifth Avenue, built for four million dollars on land that cost an equal amount (at a time when the dollar would buy much more than it does today) has a seating capacity of 2,350. The lofty ceiling is 103 feet high. The style is Romanesque, and despite the generous use of Hebrew inscriptions, a visitor, entering the huge auditorium, dimly lit by stained glass windows, might think he was in a medieval basilica.

Emanu-El, a landmark of New York, was the climax and end of a period of synagogue architecture not likely to recur.

States. The reasons for this interesting development are many. An astonishing return to religion occurred after the last war, the population shifted from the overcrowded big cities to the suburbs, and a new generation of Jews wanted big windows, light-colored walls and simple furniture for both their homes and their places of worship. In addition, synagogues became social centers to an extent that would startle many a European Jew (who could imagine a ballroom adjoining Altneuschul in Prague, or a lecture hall attached to one of the *scuolas* in the Ghetto of Venice?).

The majority of these new temples belong to Reform Congregations, but there are also some fine modern houses of worship built by conservative or orthodox congregations. Whatever his affiliation, the Jew of today is different from the one who built the "showcases" of the past. He does not want them, nor could he afford them. The old notion that a house of God must be heavily decorated, and the corollary notion, that simplicity is synonymous with poverty, are alien to him. He wants the daylight from large apertures so that the prayerbook can be read without strain, and he wants good acoustics so that the sermon can be heard. The pews must be comfortable, and the seating arrangement such that the ceremonies around the *Aron Kodesh* can be observed by every congregant. In addition to the main auditorium—the synagogue proper—there must be well-lighted premises to include lecture halls, play-rooms, storage rooms, the rabbi's study, and an office for his staff. In the America of today, the functions of the European *schulhof* are served by large, landscaped gardens where the congregants can gather before or after service and classes, and where the booth for the Feast of Tabernacles may stand. The architect must not forget to plan for a large parking area, since distances between Temple and home are often considerable.

Who are the builders of these new temples? Two names deserve special mention: Eric Mendelsohn and Percival Goodman. Mendelsohn, in the twelve years he spent in this country (he died in California late in 1953) did more than any other man to foster an organic and functional synagogue architecture. Modern temple requirements were summed up very well when he said:

"Our temples should reject the anachronistic representation of God as a feudal lord, should apply contemporary building styles and architectural conceptions to make God's house a part of the democratic community in which He dwells. . . . The House of God should either be an inspiring place for festive occasions that lift the heart of man, or an animated gathering place for a fellowship warming man's thoughts and intentions by the fire of His divine word given forth from the altar and pulpit right in their midst."

Mendelsohn lived to see two of his syn-



The unusual domed Temple Sinai in Chicago

agogues completed, those of Cleveland, Ohio, and St. Louis, Missouri. Other structures he designed, such as the ones for Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Dallas, Texas, were finished only after his death, or are still to be finished. The B'nai Amoona synagogue in St. Louis is distinguished by a parabolic roof which reaches to the sky like an outstretched hand; virtually the entire Park Synagogue in Cleveland is a dome, the third largest of its kind in the world, not set upon walls as in conventional architectural forms, but enveloping the tops of the windows. Dramatic as Mendelsohn's temples are with their bold sweeps of arches, he has somehow failed to give warmth to his grandiose edifices.

Perhaps this relative barrenness was not entirely the fault of this ingenious builder, but due to the required "bigness" of his edifices. The architects of old could break up the monotony of large spaces by marble columns and stained glass windows, hardly appropriate in an era of steel, reinforced concrete, and structural glass. Fortunately, this problem is not often encountered, for the two big temples are exceptions. By and large, the American who, during the week, does business in huge offices in city skyscrapers, seems to prefer the intimacy and

simplicity of smaller church structures. Hence, there is, oddly, a return to the "Mill Street Synagogue" of 1730 in dimension and simplicity.

Park Synagogue cost two million dollars, B'nai Amoona one million. But scores of small and unobtrusively attractive synagogues have recently been built for a fraction of these sums. Perhaps someone reminded the builders that the Lord did not reveal himself to Moses from a tall, majestic tree but from a small burning bush, and that the Decalogue was given, not on one of the great mountain peaks, but on the relatively low Mount Sinai. Percival Goodman, a New York architect, who has more than a score of synagogues to his credit, is fully aware of this. His temple for Congregation B'nai Israel, at Millburn, New Jersey, is a small building of brick, wood and glass, with a walled garden. The entire hall can be used for services, or divided, for other functions, by two movable partitions. This austere structure blends into the suburban trees and lawns, and is distinguished only by Herbert Ferber's abstract "Burning Bush" sculpture, and a simple Mogen David window. The interior decorations are simple: a mural for the foyer, by Robert Motherwell; and, hanging before the Ark, a velvet curtain designed by Adolph Gottlieb. Both artists

have used Jewish symbols in a near-abstract manner. Advocates of non-figurative art approve of this on the ground that Judaism is basically averse to realism (which is not quite correct). Another contention is that abstract art provides an atmosphere of austere sacredness while realistic art distracts the worshipper (this, of course, is a moot point).

As simple as B'nai Israel, but larger, is the Levittown Reform Temple, designed by the firm of Aarnio and Hibner, of New York. It serves a new Long Island community of young couples with young children. The one-story sprawling structure is consonant with the surrounding small houses, and owes its beauty mainly to clear, crisp lines.

If you are genuinely interested in modern synagogue architecture, go West! In California where some Jewish communities have doubled or even trebled within the past two decades, synagogues recently dedicated are dignified and aesthetically pleasing as well as functional. This is particularly marked in the Los Angeles area. There can be no more striking contrast than that between the Wilshire Boulevard Temple (Temple B'nai B'rith) built in the Hoover era, and Temple Emanuel (in Beverly Hills) opened for worship last spring. The first building reflects the tastes of a generation that believed houses to be better if they were bigger, and to be more beautiful if they were more expensive. Today the Wilshire Boulevard Temple, with its huge mosaic-inlaid dome, its Byzantine marble columns, bronze chandeliers, walnut furniture, and unimaginative illustrative murals, appears to the observer as too garish and not conducive to concentration and meditation.

By contrast, Temple Emanuel, whose architect is Sidney Eisenshtat, appeals to a generation that has attended the schools of Wright, Le Corbusier and Gropius who, as much as they differed in their tenets, were united in their fight against stylistic throwbacks. In the Sanctuary and Chapel the decoration is kept to a minimum, and the Ark, Eternal Light, Menorah were fashioned by master craftsmen who happily avoided the cliché. Noteworthy is the landscaping which blends the beau-

tiful California trees and flowers with the noble and unencumbered lines of the structure.

While Emanuel is a Reform synagogue, the new home of the Shaarei Tefila congregation (Beverly Boulevard) is a proud monument to Orthodoxy. More traditional in the choice of building material, it also achieves a quiet elegance through the omission of unnecessary detail and through the beauty of unbroken, flowing lines. By placing on one facade a clock circling its course upon Hebrew letters, Shaarei Tefila repeated a feature to be found on the ancient Town Hall in the ghetto of Prague.

I mentioned Frank Lloyd Wright. No synagogue building has ever been discussed as hotly as the one he has been

commissioned to design for the Beth Sholom congregation in suburban Philadelphia—although, so far, it exists only on paper. This is Wright's first synagogue, conceived as an odd tent-like arrangement obtained by slanting toward each other two giant-sized Tablets of the Ten Commandments. On the building's peak large Hebrew letters will proclaim, "I am the Lord thy God." It remains to be seen whether this quite unusual temple will be the promised great tribute to our religion.

America's temples, including the older ones, are, on the whole, rather different from those that have survived in Europe. When I visited the Ghetto of Venice I was at first astonished by the contrast



The B'nai Israel Synagogue in Milburn, N.J. Above, the exterior, with the panel representing the Burning Bush. Below, the foyer and Succah garden. The mural was painted by Robert Motherwell. The section at left depicts the Tablets of the Law, in the center is a criss-cross design denoting the wanderings of the Jews in the diaspora, and at right is a menorah pattern.



between the plain outside appearance of the *Scuola Spagnuola*, and its lavish baroque interior, the work of the celebrated Christian architect, Longhena. Gradually, however, I learned to understand the causes underlying this contrast. In the first place, of course, the Jews of Europe had very good reasons for making their houses of worship look as unassuming as possible. What was equally important was the fact that they did not think they had to collect worshippers by artificial means, to shout, as it were, to the man in the street—"Come in and pray!"

In free America there are no hostile crowds eager to set synagogues afire, and nothing stops Jewish congregations from making the exteriors of their temples as gaudy and ostentatious as possible—nothing save good taste, and a sound knowledge of Jewish lore and tradition. It is safe to say that, as a rule, the men who, today, are responsible for the building of new edifices, have good taste, or are, at least, wise enough to admit to themselves and to others that their judgment is not infallible. The modern rabbi, whether reform, conservative, or orthodox, is more willing to listen to suggestions made by architects, art critics, and other experts

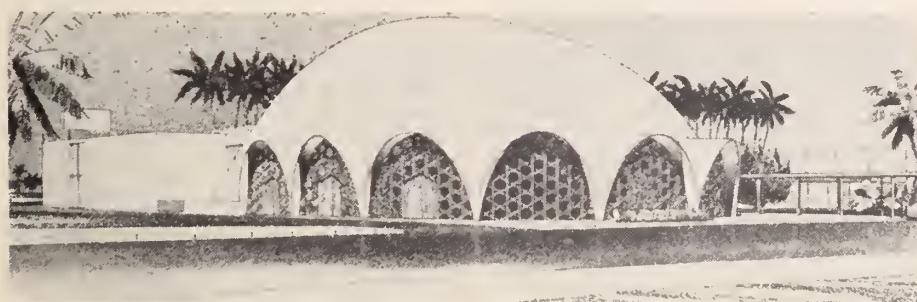


The Temple Israel in Chicago

than his predecessor. Elders of a congregation no longer disregard the advice received from trained individuals whose authority they respect.

As a result of this change of mind we now have in this country a number of synagogues with pleasing, if simple, facades, and friendly, unobtrusive interiors.

They can be found in Springfield, Mass., Baltimore, Houston, Texas, South Bend, Indiana, and many other places. To these must be added scores of temples which are not completely successful from the aesthetic viewpoint, and yet vastly superior to everything built in the spirit of the "chromo civilization" during which taste reached its lowest ebb.



Above, the picturesque Temple Beth Shalom in Miami, Florida. Below, the Temple Beth El in Providence, R. I., planned to cost, at completion, a million and a quarter dollars.



It is significant that the majority of modern houses of worship in this country, whether Christian or Jewish, extend horizontally rather than vertically. The Jew never wanted his house of worship to point up to heaven, while, in the past, the Christian preferred vertical features: tall, narrow windows, high vaults, and awe-inspiring towers. Today both churches and temples hug the earth and nestle in the landscape. One of the outstanding church builders of this country, Pietro Belluschi, professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has an explanation for this trend:

"Modern man may not wish his temple to reach to Heaven, which was the sky to the man of the Middle Ages; he may wish, rather, that it be human in scale, appropriate to the inward search and responsive to . . . the needs of a complex age."

SYNAGOGUES OF ISRAEL



Synagogue at Rishon-A-Zion

HERE are about 2,600 synagogues in Israel, nearly two thousand of which were added since the State came into being to cater to the hundreds of thousands of new immigrants in their *maberot*, villages and new towns. Many of them are merely wooden shacks, tents or rooms in private houses. Few are edifices worthy of the name save where some Rothchild or other benefactor has seen fit to immortalize his name by planting a synagogue in some village community. Even the staunchly religious—and not impoverished—residents of Jerusalem's most fashionable suburb, Rehavia, have not succeeded in erecting a house of worship as such. Their famed Yeshurun synagogue, which Ministers of State attend on high public occasions was built as the annex to a proposed house of worship which has not yet been erected. The cathedral synagogues of the diaspora are few in Israel. The sweat and toil of Jews in their ancestral land have gone into making the desert bloom, building settlements, creating a State, but not into magnificent temples.

Yet synagogue attendance is probably the highest in the world here, with 40% of the population attending synagogue every day of the week, 60% on the Sabbath, 70% on festivals and over 90% on the High Holy days. Most synagogues are overcrowded using two shifts and more, for services, and congregants sometimes spill into the courtyard. On the other hand, there are communities in the kibbutzim where congregational traditional Jewish prayer is completely unknown, and no demand for a synagogue exists, but these are confined to a special type of settlement.

The answer to the phenomenon described above lies in the fact that Israel is Jewish not by virtue of its synagogues but because of the whole gamut of everyday activities which make up life in the country. A Jew here does not have to express his loyalty or link with his people by founding or assisting in the building of a synagogue. He has first to build up life here from its roots. A roof for himself and the hundreds of thousands of new settlers, public and municipal services, school, the conquest of the soil and new industries all demand and consume his energies. If he belongs to those who attend divine service either out of conviction, tradition or habit, he needs but a place furnished with the minimum requisites—a sefer torah, table and ark, a room to stand or sit in. For instance the devout founders of one of Israel's first religious kibbutzim, famed Tirat Zvi, have prayed for nearly two decades in their dining hall. One of the kibbutz children who was taken into a town for the first time in his life and brought to a synagogue, asked in all innocence why there were no tables laid for the Sabbath meal! Only now is this community able to finance mostly out of its hard-won budget, with the help of small outside grants and loans, the £50,000 needed to build a decent synagogue. It is now on its way to completion.

Thus the synagogue in Israel is a luxury last on the list. Yet Judaism is living and vital, and religious needs are met by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which

By ARYEH NEWMAN

has a small budget and grants from the government development funds to assist in building and furnishing houses of worship after all the other pressing religious necessities have been met. Money is required for law courts to administer Jewish law, Rabbis, Judges and Shochetim, burial services, kashrut of all produce, including such matters as tithes and *orlah*,^{*} supervision of kitchens of most hotels, all hospitals and public institutions. All these must be attended to first.

How then does a synagogue arise in Israel? New immigrants usually fall into groups with similar Liturgical rites. They hire a room or start a service in someone's house, eventually graduating to a small shack, and helped along by the Ministry of Religious affairs, which has standardized arks, reading desks and seats, and collects *Sifrei Torah*, piecing together parchment sections rescued from Europe into whole scrolls. The forming of large groups capable of shouldering the financial burden of building a special edifice is usually precluded by the differences between the various communities. Even the Yemenites themselves, regarded as a compact homogeneous community, in reality comprise various groups who will on no account pray together. The more intense their religious devotion and loyalty, the more insistent the demand for separate services and the resistance to attempts to combine and merge.

The idea of fusing the exiles is very current in Israel and abroad, particularly in speeches and statements, and attempts are being made to translate it into practice in the religious sphere as well. But there is no doubt that with the older generation, at least, these distinctions will be preserved, and no purpose is served by trying to gloss over them.

But what of the youth? Young people brought up in Israel religious schools adhere more or less to a common pattern,

* Uncircumcised fruit. By Scriptural law for the first four years, the fruit of a tree is forbidden.

using the same liturgical rites, the same Hebrew pronunciation, and it is they who constitute the strongest fusing force in the country.

Israel youth, particularly in the Bnei Akiva movement, pray in their own youth synagogues and clubs, following the pattern set by the religious kibbutzim, and often prevail on their parents of diverse religious upbringing to sink their "ritual" differences and pray in accordance with "minbag (rite) Israel." In the district where I live, a new and growing suburb of Jerusalem, every group of newcomers as it moves in forms its own little coventicle—Hungarians, Germans "Anglo Saxons", Syrians, Poles, Hassidim. Today most of these groups have merged and fill to capacity the one diminutive synagogue originally built to cater to the then small neighborhood. They have adopted an Israel *minbag* for the sake of the children.

Actually, despite the differences between the various rites in Israel synagogues, no group, however conservative, adheres to its diaspora pattern. There are the changes forced on them by the special religious customs applying to all Jews living in the Holy Land. The priestly blessing, abolished in many diaspora synagogues is recited daily by the priests in all synagogues, in accordance with ancient rite. Services, are on the whole, shorter, the Sabbath morning service beginning in most synagogues between seven and eight a.m., and they are over by 9:30. Sermons are almost unknown, and the Rabbi of the neighborhood is attached to the community as a whole rather than to any particular synagogue. He is an official of the State and usually attends synagogue just like any other congregant, having no special duties to perform there. He will sit in an honored position and may divide his Sabbaths as he pleases, attending services where he sees fit. Women play little part in Israel synagogue activities and, apart from a few large synagogues, find themselves well and truly caged, latticed or curtained in the traditional "*Ezrat nashim*" (women's quarter) after the pattern of East European synagogues. Their position is somewhat less circumscribed and remote in the youth synagogues and in the kibbutzim, but nowhere do they sit together with menfolk.

This brings us to the question of reform or even to smaller changes in ser-

SYNAGOGUES IN JERUSALEM

By NURA LASKY

ON WEEK-DAYS, the streets of Northern Jerusalem, close by the Jordan border, are full of noise and bustle. There are market-goers, gossiping housewives, children playing in the streets. It is a kaleidoscope of ever changing patterns and colors.

Then, on Friday, the eve of Sabbath, comes the transformation. At the approach of sundown the streets are empty. The only figures you see are all out for one purpose. Black and grey coated, they pass along the winding cobblestoned streets. They are the worshippers.

Without knowing one's way about, it would be difficult to find the synagogue, unless one followed the sound of singing through the quiet alleys. But we were lucky. Yehezkiel Freiman, a fifth-generation Jerusalemit, long had dreamed of spending Friday afternoons conducting tours of the synagogues for foreigners and interested Israelis. His dream has now become a reality.

In a little room of the Government Tourist Office, enthusiastic Mr. Freiman first explains to the visitors what they are about to see—Bukharian, Sephardi, Yemenite, and various Hassidic synagogues. In a brief talk he builds up the atmosphere for his listeners. "Geographically speaking, the synagogues are near each other, less than 200 yards apart. But figuratively speaking, they are more than 200 years apart. This tour takes you through Jewish history, for these people adhere to the customs of their native lands: they pray as their fathers and forefathers prayed."

vices as they are in vogue in American conservative congregations. The answer to this can be found in the religious realities of the Israel scene. The country is divided, for the most part, between those traditionally educated and those receiving no traditional religious training whatever. God, prayer, synagogue of whatever denomination, are anathema to that section of the population which is secularly educated, or given a secular approach. But the synagogue attendants are in sympathy with one kind of Judaism

"In their clothes," Freiman goes on, "you see their ancient national habits reflected: the black Astrakhan hats, national headdress of the Shahs, in the Persian synagogues; the Hassidic *streimels* were originally the headdress of Polish squires; the Yemenites still wear the *talles* their ancestors wore in the Arabian desert centuries ago." But above all, explains the dedicated guide, through their prayers can be traced the history of their suffering in the *galuth*.

From the Persian synagogue, looking out toward Jordan-held Jerusalem and Mount Scopus in the distance, we crossed the road to the Sephardi house of prayer, where singing went on as the *marranos* used to sing ages ago in their camouflaged underground synagogues.

Similarly with the Yemenites, a couple of hundred yards further on. Through the lighted windows of a massive stone house we could see an old man, his brows knit together in his effort at concentration, cross-legged on the floor, swaying backward and forward to the rhythm of the prayer.

Another few hundred yards took us through centuries, to the Polish *shuls*. There the hassidim were celebrating the Sabbath—the Sabbath for which they had waited all week—with prayers chanted in ecstasy. "If you ask a Hassid," Freiman had told the visitors, "what is the Sabbath, he will answer, 'a gift of God, a symbol of freedom.' In Poland the Jews kept the Sabbath, but it was the Sabbath

(Continued on next page)

—the fully orthodox practices and beliefs and norms as regulated by the Israel Chief Rabbinate. Religious youth in Israel have found within the framework of orthodoxy a form of prayer satisfying the demands of the milieu in which they have been brought up. Their services are distinguished by informality, praying open-necked in white shirt and shorts in the open, or club or kibbutz shack, accompanied by a great deal of community singing, and by clear enunciation without frills or cantorial flourish of the liturgy.



Evening Prayer in the Tel Aviv Synagogue

that kept the Jews." As it was in Poland so in Jerusalem's Mea Shearim, the *shul* is both house of worship and center of social release, where Jews foregather to talk, exchange news, pray. One removes his *streimel* and pensively begins to count the 12 fur tails symbolizing the Twelve Tribes. Another is bowed over the Bible, his lips moving silently; a third holds a young son on his knee and teaches him.

In 1938, Freiman tells his audience, a Yemenite called Yehia came to Jerusalem with his son Sa'adia. They went to the Wailing Wall, and Yehia wept—"because of the downfall of our people and the destruction of Jerusalem." But, he told his son, "you must not weep, for it is your task to regain and restore what we have lost." Exactly ten years later, Sa'adia was a member of the Haganah near the

old windmill facing enemy-held Mount Zion. The commander asked for volunteers to begin the advance against the Arab Legionnaires. Sa'adia stepped forward. "This will be my privilege, for I want to regain and restore Jerusalem." The commander handed him the dynamite with which to blow up Zion Gate, warning him it might cost him his life. Sa'adia kissed it, jumped over the ridge of the hill up to Mount Zion. Shortly afterwards the hill was in Israel hands.

Walking up to "newer" Jerusalem, we passed several brightly lit houses and caught glimpses of many stern or smiling faces within, deeply engrossed in prayer. The Yemenites' song still floated along to us. "Bring us on eagles' wings to Jerusalem," they repeated the age-old chant, "Save us for our sons. . . ."

The Synagogue of the Brooklyn Jewish Center

By DR. ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL

ONE of the most beautiful features in our entire Center structure is the Synagogue. Despite the fact that it was built more than thirty-six years ago it is still regarded by all who see it as one of the most beautiful Synagogues in the city. It is large and spacious, with a great dome of stained glass windows which provide a fine illumination throughout the building.

There are almost 1,500 seats in the Synagogue despite the fact that the balcony is quite small. The pulpit is simple but dignified in its design. We were very fortunate in securing a number of artistic furnishings from Israel to adorn the pulpit. When the Palestine Pavilion was shown at the last World's Fair in Flushing, our Center purchased the magnificent wrought-iron gate for the Holy Ark which was designed by a famous artist in Israel, and we also secured the Parochet, or curtain that covers the Ark, which was also exhibited at the Fair.

In the very early years of the Center Professor Boris Shatz, the founder and director of the Bezalel Art School in Jerusalem, visited America and held one of his exhibits in the Center. The Sisterhood at that time purchased the Chair of Elijah, a beautiful work which now adorns our pulpit.

This Synagogue, as part of the Center building, has attracted the attention of other communities, and has been a model for synagogue building construction and for the uses to which synagogues are now put. In the Center Synagogue have been held functions of all types for the benefit and inspiration of the community. Many of the world's notable figures have appeared in it to express their views, and many great artists have shared their gifts with members of the congregation and the community.

The physical character of the Center Synagogue was intended to inspire a spirit of reverence, of pride in Judaism, and an urge towards Judaism, as well as offer a warm environment for events of value to the members and the community they lived in. During the years, the membership has felt that these purposes have been realized.

THE GRANDMOTHER

By LAYLE SILBERT

ELLEN sat deep in the back corner of the car. How many times had she made this trip with her parents from their home in Chicago to the hated house of her aunt and her hateful boy cousins in Goshen. This dull, gray day wasn't Christmas or spring vacation or the 4th of July, but the day before the coming of her grandmother.

For weeks Ellen had been listening to her father and mother talking about the coming of her mother's mother from Europe. She followed the excited discussion about visas, passports, tickets, ships and train times. Letters from relatives in all parts of the country flew in and out of the house. The immigrants' aid society, which was meeting her at the ship, was to place her on the train for Goshen. Tomorrow she would arrive.

About the grandmother herself Ellen hardly heard anything. She tried to imagine this new person in her life. Sometimes she fancied her grandmother might be like the comfortable portrait on Mother's Day posters. In her heart though Ellen knew this image couldn't be right. All she really was sure of was that her grandmother was old. Maybe like the aunt of her piano teacher. This tiny, old lady, neat as a doll, who came from Europe many years ago, sat in an old mahogany chair while Ellen took her piano lesson.

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"Tante Leeda," the piano teacher called her. The foreign sounds were rich and loving. When Ellen said them over to herself, she could almost smell again the piano teacher's house, with an old flowery sweetness most noticeable near the aunt. Did all European old ladies have strange, foreign odors? Tante Leeda had a little, broad face, a perky nose and bright, brown eyes. Her white hair was held on top of her head by thick pins, and little diamond earrings sparkled in her ears. Around her neck a narrow black band set off her lovely old head from the silky black dress.

When the piano lesson was finished the aunt would always say in a deep accent, "Goodby, my child. I enjoyed listening to you," and smile sincerely.

The short fall day had grown dark when they reached Goshen. The car climbed the winding gravel road to the top of the hill where her aunt Anna and Uncle Henry lived. Ellen's other aunts

and uncles had already arrived and cousins swarmed all over the house. Ellen was kissed absently several times. The grown-ups were very excited, exchanging greetings and news.

She escaped over the suitcases in the kitchen and fled upstairs to the little bedroom on the second floor where she always stayed alone because there was no girl cousin to put in with her.

When she heard calls of "Dinner" downstairs, she came down. In the huge dining room, the table was pulled out to the last leaf. All her relatives sat around it. The children were put at one end. Here were all of her aunts and uncles, two of them really only grownup cousins, and the children. Ellen avoided the silly talk of the boys about baseball and listened to the grownups. She didn't even get angry when the biggest, Maxie, tried to tease her.

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There was so much to eat it took several aunts to carry it all in from the kitchen. The heaping dishes of roast, mounds of baked potatoes and sweet corn from the Indiana countryside disappeared and several aunts carried the dishes away. Her Aunt Anna set a glass of milk in front of each child. In a moment, the order of banishment came.

"Now the children may all leave," said her Uncle Henry. Maxie and the other boys bolted away. "And go to bed in a half hour," added her Aunt Anna after them.

"You, too, little Ellen," said her uncle.

I am not little, Ellen said to herself. I'm in first year high and that's more than anybody else, even Maxie who's older than I am. She appealed to her father. He smiled.

"Come now, foolish girl," he said. "What do you want to stay with the grownups for? It's not interesting to you, child." It was all right for her father to say "child" to her. He didn't mean it the same way others did.

"I want to stay," she said unhappily.

"All right. All right. Let her stay." Her father gave in easily.

She settled down to watch and listen. Never before had her parents and rela-

tives seemed so close. They were more like a big family than she had ever noticed before. The men talked about "business," something that must always be talked about when they got together. Her father was gesturing with a cigarette. With his thick, black hair and his black mustache he still looked quite like the picture at home of him and her mother, taken so long ago before she was born.

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The grownups began to talk about politics. In their excitement they dipped into their mother tongue for the rich familiar words to express their most striking ideas and strongest feelings. Ellen was enchanted.

The dinner dishes were gone and a huge bowl of oranges and nuts appeared. She looked across the long white tablecloth littered with nutshells and orange peels, at the little fruit knives and the silver nutpicks. The grownups were drinking tea.

Her father snapped a lump of sugar in two between his teeth and drank his tea out of a glass. Her Aunt Anna still observed some of the old ways. The uncles also drank out of glasses, but the aunts drank out of cups, following the lead of her Aunt Doris, wife of her Uncle Saul. She was the youngest aunt and the most modern, with her hair marcelled and flawless English. Sometimes Ellen hoped to be like her when she grew up.

Then as if they hadn't been talking and thinking about the grandmother anyway most of the time, somebody said, "And tomorrow the mama comes."

"Yes," her mother said. "For so many years we havn't seen her."

Her mother's face was warm and lit up. Her short hair was ruffled, with a wisp trailing on one cheek. In a mellow voice, she asked her sister, "Do you remember, Anna, the last time we saw her?"

"Surely, I remember." They said these things in the familiar way of people who had talked over an important happening many times before.

"Tell us about it." Her father leaned

forward with interest. Ellen knew he had heard it before too.

"She told us to go in happiness," began her mother in a distant voice, "and that she would see us soon. None of us knew when or how. And now it is thirty years, long years. So much has happened."

Her Aunt Anna spoke. "She was tall and straight and strong — our mother. How hard she had to work to bring us up by herself. Our father left her alone with such a big brood." She was dreamy too and forgot to sigh.

From a corner, her Aunt Ella sniffled. "What are you crying for, Ella? Be happy." Her father waved his cigarette at Aunt Ella.

Ellen was trying to picture a grandmother who was tall and straight and strong.

"How happy we were then," her Aunt Ella stopped crying with effort. "When we were young, before we left. Do you remember, how we all walked in the moonlight, we girls in our white dresses with our hair down our backs? We sang so beautifully, so loudly the peasants stopped on the road to listen."

The faces around the table glowed and the tea glasses shone yellow in the light. Somebody, her Uncle Saul, picked up a fruit knife and began cutting an orange peel into meaningless bits. Cigarette smoke eddied, mixing with orangey smells. The light fell from the ceiling fixture on the table, leaving shadows in the corners.

"Yes," said her Aunt Anna. "We were so young and filled with dreams of the new country. Ella, sing. Please sing."

A clamor arose. "Sing, Ella," they pleaded.

Everyone settled down. The room was quiet and Ellen sat as still as she could. Her Aunt Ella lifted her faded blonde head and began to sing. At first, she sang softly as if she were thinking to herself. Then the music became bitter and stronger. Her aunt's voice rose to a wild cry, wailing in the house on the top of the hill. She closed her eyes and tossed her head. Some of the others swayed with the music and looked sad. With a half-spoken exclamation, she finished the song. Ellen had never heard it before, but the others seemed to know the song well.

"Oh, mama, mama," sobbed her Aunt Anna. How solemn everybody was.

"Good. Good," said her Uncle Henry. Her father said, "She has lived through war and revolution and hunger and oppression." He was talking in his mother tongue, with passionate emphasis on each word. "We were spared."

Her mother suddenly noticed Ellen.

"Go to bed, Ellen," she said. "It's late. This talk is not for you."

Ellen got up to go. "Good night, everybody," she said politely.

"Good night, dear," her mother got up and kissed her.

Ellen felt like crying. Her father waved her away with a perky smile. "You're a big girl, I see. Good night, daughter." He seemed to wink at her and turned back to the table. "She's a

big girl. She understands," Ellen heard him say.

As she went up the lonely stairs, wishing fervently she wouldn't run into a cousin, she thought how good her father was to her.

The next morning, when she awoke, she ran to the window. Three cars were crunching the gravel on the driveway down the side of the hill. The grownups were going to the railway station to meet the grandmother.

Ellen dressed, deciding quickly to wear the yellow sweater and plaid skirt for her grandmother because they made her hair blacker. She came down the stairs, sensing the big house to be empty. The dining room was silent and bare in the morn-

LETTER TO THE "REVIEW"

IN YOUR December 1955 issue you carried an article on Vladimir Jabotinsky by Leon Spitz, in which the writer extols the departed Zionist leader. Jabotinsky fully deserves the praise lavished on him by Mr. Spitz. But unfortunately some of the facts, well-intentioned as they undoubtedly are, are confused and I trust that you will permit me to correct them in order to keep the record straight.

Mr. Spitz, in referring to Jabotinsky's incarceration by the British in Fort Acca, writes in connection with his release: "But the bloody Mufti of Jerusalem—who incited the Arab riots—was released at the same time." At the time of Jabotinsky's release in July 1920, Haj-Amin El Husseini, who had not yet been a mufti, was in Syria. He had jumped his bail and fled to that country on the eve of his trial which was to have taken place at the same time as the trial of Jabotinsky and eighteen other members of the Haganah, including myself. However, Haj-Amin was pardoned by Sir Herbert Samuel a little later and, shortly after his return to Palestine, Sir Herbert appointed him Mufti of Jerusalem even though the vote of the Moslem Council went against the rascal.

Jabotinsky organized no Jewish "brigade." That term came into existence in World War Two. The Jewish Brigade in World War Two consisted of Palestinian volunteers who fought in Italy and Africa. Jabotinsky was the organizer of the Jewish Legion. The Zion Mule Corps

was conceived by Jabotinsky and Joseph Trumpeldor and preceded the Jewish Legion. The Zion Mule Corps was sent to Gallipoli where the British made an abortive effort to wrest the Dardanelles from the Turks. One hundred and twenty survivors of a contingent of the Zion Mule Corps (the boat which evacuated them from Gallipoli struck a mine) who were brought to London, subsequently became the nucleus of the first battalion of the Jewish Legion. This battalion was officially known as the 38th Battalion Royal Fusiliers.

After Jabotinsky's service in the Legion and his release from Acca, he went to England. When he wanted to return to Palestine, Mr. Spitz maintains, "The British authorities refused him permission to re-enter the country." Incorrect. Mr. Jabotinsky returned more than once. For a while he was even the representative of the Judea Life Insurance Co. in Palestine. However, after the 1929 riots in the Holy Land, when Jabotinsky, in testifying before the Shaw Commission sent to investigate the riots, sharply criticized the Palestine Government, he was banned from the country.

May I suggest that the Jewish Legion which fathered the Haganah and out of whose ranks came the Army of Israel's Liberation, as well as many great leaders of the State of Israel, including President Itzchak Ben-Zvi and David Ben-Gurion, deserves more than the cursory treatment it has received in Mr. Spitz' article.

ELIAS GILNER.

ing light and the huge table still open as far as it would go, covered with a fresh white tablecloth.

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In the kitchen, she saw that her cousins had already had their breakfast and left their dishes. She found a glass of milk and a dish of cereal untouched on the table. She ate, listening to her cousins playing outside noisily, shouting unfeelingly to one another.

She was deeply stirred, thinking about the important thing about to happen.

The aimless shouting outside turned into "They're coming! They're coming!" Ellen joined the boys and anxiously watched the three cars climb up the hill.

First came the big, black car — her Uncle Saul's, of course. Behind was her father's car and then Uncle Henry's. She rocked impatiently, as one car, the next and finally the last stopped. From the last two cars, her aunts and uncles and her mother and father came out and advanced to the first car.

Finally, her Uncle Saul left the driver's seat and ran quickly around to open the back door. The grownups clustered around the door like a guard. Ellen could scarcely tell what was happening.

Out of the back of Uncle Saul's car appeared a small, shapeless creature who moved very slowly. Ellen's mother and her Aunt Anna walked on either side, with her Uncle Saul behind. Ellen looked dully, feeling numb. This was her grandmother.

The creature was bent and smaller than any of the other grownups. Her head was covered with a tight shawl. Another shawl was wound around her shoulders. As she walked painfully to the kitchen door, Ellen saw that she was shabby and formless, with a black apron tied around her middle. She wore old men's shoes, broken and dull.

Ellen moved aside to let the quiet procession enter the kitchen. She saw the face. It was featureless, wrinkled, with tiny, sunken eyes and a passive expression. Not a wisp of hair showed.

Ellen shuddered with despair. Where was the light, happy, blue-eyed grandmother smiling out at her from Mother's Day posters? Where was the tidy, aristocratic European aunt with powdery white hair and sparkling earrings?

The boys peeked through the door after everybody went in. Ellen stayed in the

same place, bewildered and heartbroken. She thought of crying but changed her mind. Maybe she would go upstairs and read her book. She fought the secret misery growing inside her. Nobody would notice if she disappeared now.

Her Aunt Anna came to the door.

"Come in, children," she cried, "and meet your grandmother." Aunt Anna looked curiously thoughtful and sad, not at all like last night.

Ellen led the boys into the kitchen. Her Aunt Anna ushered them into the living room without a word. The creature was huddled deep in a big, easy chair, moving her head a little when somebody spoke. Next to her, Ellen's mother sat with a solemn, important expression. Today her hair was neat; she still held her gloves in one hand.

"Mama, here are your grandchildren," her Aunt Anna said. She took Ellen first by the hand and put her before the old woman. "This one is the daughter of Ada," she said, using Ellen's mother's given name.

The thin, drooping lips opened and the small eyes turned to her, but hardly

seemed to see. Ellen noticed a queer, musty odor from the shapeless clothes which fell almost to the floor.

"Be healthy, child," a thin voice said in Yiddish, sounding more foreign than her parents ever did when they spoke it. Her grandmother raised a bony, veined hand from her lap.

Ellen only smiled timidly and stepped away to let the other cousins be introduced. Maxie was next after her. The procedure was the same.

"Now, go away. Your grandmother is tired." Her mother addressed them where they stood stiffly in the middle of the carpet. The boys ran off. They had seemed embarrassed. Ellen's disappointment was growing more bitter and overpowering. Her grandmother was so strange, so distant, so ugly. Suddenly she shrugged. Just another grownup.

She went back into the kitchen. Her Aunt Anna came in and bustled about, setting coffee-pots on the stove. The uncles and her father were gathered outside the kitchen door talking. At the kitchen table, her Aunt Ella bent her head in her arms and wept, while her Aunt

(Continued on page 22)

ISRAELI TREATIES WITH THE U. S. A.

By BORIS SMOLAR

YOU may be interested to know that over 40 agreements and treaties between the United States and Israel materially help business and commercial relations between the two countries. They provide a sound legal foundation for the participation by American businessmen, investors and technicians in economic activity in Israel. There is a great similarity in the U. S. and Israeli concepts of the treatment of matters concerning commerce, finance and the rights of the individuals in the two democracies. The main agreements underscoring these concepts are the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation, the Technical Cooperation agreements, and agreements on aviation.

Negotiations are now being conducted for the conclusion of an American-Israeli tax treaty. The purpose of this treaty is to eliminate double taxation. This would induce the flow of private investment capital from the United States to Israel.

There is also a plan under consideration for a so-called "private Point Four" program for Israel. The plan has been discussed by the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce. It calls for the establishment by the Chamber of a special division in the United States for processing of requests by Israeli firms for expert advice and "know-how."

A clearing center of the Chamber in Israel will, at the same time, examine offers of such assistance from American manufacturers and businessmen. Incidentally, two Israeli companies have now placed orders in the U. S. for \$2,500,000 worth of oil drilling equipment. The equipment will be used to intensify drilling operations by various American and Israeli groups prospecting oil in Israel. Israel is now also testing German drilling equipment. If it proves to be more efficient, Israel drilling companies may acquire such equipment from Germany under the reparations pact.

From time to time the REVIEW reacquaints its readers with material of unusual interest which it has published during the two decades of its existence. The following article is in that privileged category, dealing as it does with an area of the world of especial interest today.

NOT unlike the history of Jewry itself, the Jews of the Mediterranean littoral in particular have been dispersed to all the isles and islets of that sea.

Gibraltar—from the time when it became a British stronghold—has possibly been the most significant Jewish stronghold as well. The Jewish settlement of Gibraltar is assigned to the period immediately after the British occupation in 1705—although Marranos had attempted unsuccessfully, to establish it as a refuge in the 15th century. Most of those Jewish settlers, who were Sephardic, came from the Moroccan coast. Their first synagogue—Etz Hayyim—was founded in 1759. At that time the community numbered about 600. This number grew rapidly—by infiltration of Sephardic settlers, by migrants from Morocco, Leghorn, Amsterdam and England itself.

In 1859 Gibraltar Jews offered shelter to some 3,000 Jews from the Barbary coast. With characteristic generosity the Gibraltar Jews gave assistance, periodically, to other refugees as well, particularly in 1907, to the Jews of Casablanca.

Orthodoxy is widespread and rigidly observed by Gibraltar Jewry. No theatre is open on Friday evening. In Main Street, Jewish shops are closed on the Sabbath and on religious holidays. At present there are four synagogues, although the population is less than one thousand.

As usual, under whatever conditions, Jewry thrusts itself into prominence. Among Gibraltar notables was Aaron Cardozo, diplomat, and consul for Tunis and Algiers, who was sent, early in the nineteenth century, to conclude a treaty with Sidi Mahomed, Bey of Oran. Lord Nelson gave Cardozo the use of a frigate for his mission.

Another prominent Jew was Judah Benoliel—who acted as the secular representative of Gibraltar Jewry. He arbitrated a dispute between the King of Sardinia and the Sultan of Morocco.

Benoliel's distinguished appearance won him the name of "King of Gibraltar."

Not far from Gibraltar lie the Balearic Islands—that furnished such skilled slingers to the Roman armies. The largest of these islands—Majorca—is still the home of Jews descended from Spanish Marranos. Toward the close of the fourteenth century the Jews of Majorca were "converted"—by torture and threat of death. Since then the Majorca Jews—who are of marked Semitic look and bearing—always kept apart from non-Jewish circles on the island. In the city of Palma the Jews have their own quarter. They inter-marry only with their own kind. By the Gentiles they are known as *chuetas*.

Malta has a long Jewish tradition dating back to Phoenician traders, to Roman days, and to the early Christian eras. Candelabra with Hebrew inscriptions and similar Judaic relics have been unearthed. In the Middle Ages Malta was a refuge for Sephardic Jews escaping from the Inquisition. The Jewish community—called *Judaica* or, in Arabic, *Aljama*—consisted of traders, shopkeepers, and also medical men who rose to prominence. There were periods of expulsion, civic and political restrictions, slavery, imprisonment. Waves of conquest by different racial groups swept the island. There is still a cemetery recalling Arab influence. It is called *Kebir el Lhud*—Burial Place of the Jews.

The present population is infinitely small, consisting of only a bare handful of Jewish families. There is still the synagogue; and the memory of a turbulent history.

Sicily holds a history of Jewish repres-sions, persecutions, excessive taxation—from the sixth century to the culmination of banishments and violence in the fourteenth. The Jewish population has since been negligible.

Sardinia, on the other hand, had a Jewish settlement as early as the first century, when the Emperor Tiberius banished 4,000 Jewish youths to the island. Throughout Sardinian history, Jews—strangely enough—were treated with no

A Fascinating Account of Jewish Island Settlements

MEDITERRANEAN JEWS

By HARRY E. WEDECK

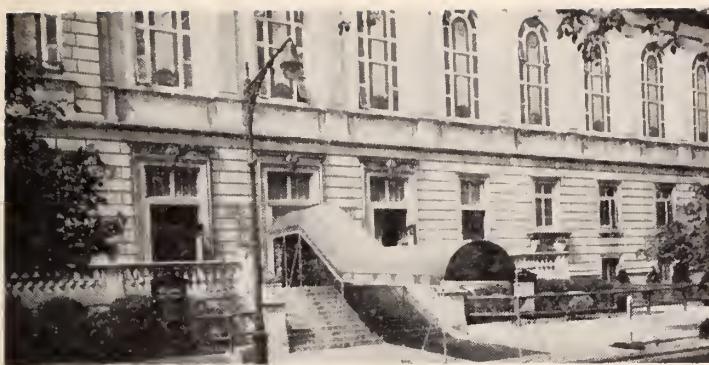
discriminatory distinction by the Romans; while the advent of Christianity brought in its wake banishments and temporary recall; massacre, persecution, and continual conflict. As in Sicily, the Jewish population is now of small significance.

At the eastern end of the Mediterranean lies a large, disparate cluster of Greek islands—some so small as to be uninhabitable; others encrusted with centuries of historical experience. Here too the Jews—however ineffectually—made their home. Even the smallest Aegean islands were sought as a refuge. Thus Cephalonia—in the Cyclades—has a settlement of Sephardic Jews. In Crete—also known as Candia—the Jewish settlements, dating from the centuries before the Christian era, were reasonably treated by the Romans. Successively, the island was in the hands of Saracens, Byzantines, and Venetians. In the middle centuries Spanish exiles increased the Jewish communities. Intellectual activities flourished—in medicine, pure scholarship, philosophy. One of the most notable members was Joseph Solomon Delmedigo, physician, linguist, traveler. Now there are some 200 families—in the cities of Khania, Retimo, and Candia. Before the Nazis came they were small traders, craftsmen, fishermen.

Even in ancient Greek days there were Jews in Cyprus. In their history flames the uprising against the Romans under Trajan. Later, the Jews adjusted themselves to the island. In the middle ages that inquiring traveler, Benjamin de Tudela, found his co-religionists well established there; a prominent figure—in the early 16th century—was Moses ben Joseph Arovas, a physician. In the late nineteenth century attempts were made to colonize the island with Rumanian Jews, but these attempts were consistently abortive. Now there are only a few families. Greek is spoken by the Jews; and also *Judeo-Spanish*, known as *Ladino*.

Corfu experienced waves of immigrati-

(Continued on page 22)



NEWS OF THE CENTER

Rabbi Levinthal to Discuss "Conservative Judaism" at Late Services

This Friday, January 27th, at our Late Friday Night Lecture Services which begin at 8:30 o'clock, Dr. Levinthal will deliver the third lecture of the series and will discuss the subject "Conservative Judaism—Its Strength and Its Weakness." This series is proving a most interesting one and large numbers of members are attending each of the lectures. We are confident that many of our members will also want to hear the rabbi's discussion of this important ideology of Conservative Judaism.

Cantor Sauler will lead in the congregational singing and render a vocal selection.

Advance Notice

Next Friday, February 3rd, at our Late Friday Night Lecture Services, Rabbi Kreitman will deliver the third lecture in his series "Faith For Modern Times," and will speak on "Isolation and Faith." Members of the U. S. Y. will participate in the service and will report on their recent convention.

Dr. Levinthal to Repeat Lecture on 'Orthodoxy' Next Sabbath Morning

Because of many requests from those who could not attend Friday Night Services, Rabbi Levinthal will repeat his lecture on "Orthodox Judaism" at the services next Saturday morning, February 4th. The rabbi will start preaching the sermon promptly at 10:50 o'clock.

Playing of National Anthems

For the information of members who have made inquiry as to the proper protocol for the playing or singing of the American and Israeli national anthems at meetings or affairs, we are herewith quoting from a letter received from the Department of State: "It is customary

to play a foreign national anthem first followed by the anthem of the United States."

Hebrew School P.T.A. Meeting Feb. 1

The Parent-Teachers Association of the Hebrew School will hold a "Meet the Faculty" meeting on Wednesday evening, February 1st, at 8:45 o'clock. The Hon. Cecile Ruth Sands, a member of the New York City Board of Education, will be the guest speaker. Musical selections will be sung by Ann Joy Levitt. A collation will follow. All welcome.

Sabbath Services

Kindling of Candles 4:45 p.m.
Friday evening services at 4:50 p.m.
Sabbath Services commence at 8:30 a.m.
Sidra or portions of Torah—"Beshalah"—Exodus 13.17-17.16. Haphtorah Reading: Prophets—Judges 4.4-5.31.

Rabbi Kreitman will preach on the weekly portion of the Torah.

Cantor Sauler will officiate together with the Center Choral Group under the leadership of Mr. Sholom Secunda.

Class in Talmud under the leadership of Rabbi Jacob S. Doner will be held at 3:20 p.m.

The lecture in Yiddish by Dr. Abraham Asen on the subject "The Pious of the Other Nations," will be held at 4:20 p.m.
Minha services at 4:50 p.m.

Daily Services

Morning services at 7:00 and 8:00 o'clock. Minha services at 4:50 P.M. followed by Maariv.

Dinner Honoring Louis J. Gribetz

A dinner in tribute to Louis J. Gribetz, honorary member of the Center Governing Board, and Chairman of the Editorial Board of the *Review*, was given by the Yeshivath Torah Vodaath, of Brooklyn, on the occasion of the 38th anniversary

of the institution. The dinner was held at the Waldorf-Astoria and was attended by 1,200 guests.

Rabbi Lewittes Returns From Sabbatical Leave

Rabbi Mordecai H. Lewittes, Principal of our Hebrew Schools, who has been on a six-month Sabbatical leave will return to take up his duties again as head of the department commencing with the Spring semester on February 1st.

The Hebrew Education Committee extends a hearty welcome to Rabbi Lewittes as well as many thanks to Mr. Aaron Krumbein, who took over as Acting Principal and did a fine job during this period.

Congratulations

Heartiest congratulations and best wishes are extended to:

Mr. and Mrs. Lou Honig of 650 Ocean Avenue on the engagement of their daughter, Ann Kay, to Mr. Stanley Seeb of Englewood, N. J. Congratulations are also extended to the grandfather, Mr. Samuel Kamenetzky.

Acknowledgment of Gifts

We acknowledge with grateful thanks receipt of donations for the purchase of Prayer Books and Taleisim from the following:

Mr. and Mrs. Meyer Kaplan in memory of nephew, Lawrence A. Ritchie.

Mrs. Max Levenson in honor of son's marriage.

Mr. and Mrs. Lester Shirk in honor of son's Bar Mitzvah.

Condolence

We extend our most heartfelt condolences to:

Mr. Louis Schneider of 617 Empire Boulevard on the loss of his beloved mother, Annie, on January 13th.

THE YOUNGER MEMBERSHIP

FEBRUARY is "Jewish Music Month" and the Brooklyn Jewish Center has planned a gala Music Festival which Young Folk Leaguers should not miss. On Tuesday evening, February 21st, a symphony orchestra under the able leadership of Mr. Sholom Secunda, the Music Director of the Center, will play selections chosen to represent the full range of Jewish music. I had the opportunity of being present at some of the committee meetings at which the evening's agenda was planned and I can report that the program will be a rare treat.

The regular weekly meeting of the Young Folks League will be held on Tuesday evening, February 21st, in conjunction with this festival. Thus, there will be no meeting scheduled for February 22nd. Please note the change.

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I have been mulling over a situation which has left me a little uneasy. If we objectively analyze our meetings we find that although the attendance, programs, social periods and refreshments are adequate, a certain spark is still lacking. It seems as though a certain degree of warmth is missing. I have always felt that good fellowship originated in our group activities and was transferred to our meetings. A good example is our bowling group. An afternoon of bowling is certainly a good opportunity to meet and chat with fellow-members. This same relaxed atmosphere and informality can be found at all our activities. If you participate in a group activity you will find that you are sowing the seeds of friendship and by cultivating friendship you shall be rewarded with excellent dividends.

Calendar of Events

Fri., Jan. 27: All Young Folks League members are invited to attend the Oneg Shabbat held weekly following the Late Friday Night Lecture Services. Join us every week.

Sat., Jan. 28: Join us every Sabbath morning at the services in the Main Synagogue in YFL row.

Sun., Jan. 29: 10:30 a.m.—"Brunch" in behalf of the Jewish Theological Seminary at the Center. Members of the YFL are urged to attend.

The Junior League

THE Junior League has now completed its mid-winter reorganization. A new slate of officers and Executive Committee members has been elected and installed. It is already functioning in accordance with the group's by-laws.

With college examinations out of the way, the plans fall for an ambitious series of meetings in February. Next week, on February 2, there will be a recorded presentation of the famous Broadway play, "The World of Sholem Aleichem." On the following Thursday, the Junior League has scheduled an illustrated talk on the role of Hebrew music today.

On February 16, Mr. Hyman Brickman, who personally leads the group, will talk on the status of Jewish migration today throughout the world. This will be followed on the 23rd by the annual Purim Carnival and Party. The Junior League will, as usual, join the Young Folks League and Young Married Group in sponsoring the Purim celebration after the Megillah reading on Saturday evening, February 25th.

In Our Hebrew School

THE grade conferences of the Hebrew School have come to a close. All of them were very well attended. Parents benefited from the discussions and gained in their perspective of the children's Jewish education.

Our first grade classes have completed their Hebrew primer and have begun the study of *Siddur*. Parties have been arranged in all these classes to celebrate this occasion.

The students of all our departments have just completed their Jewish National Fund drive collecting over \$1,400. A banner will be given to the class that brought in the most money. A grove of 1,000 trees is being planted in Israel in honor of our principal, Rabbi Mordecai H. Lewittes and Mrs. Lewittes.

Our school was awarded the "Certificate of Merit" by the Educators' Council of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York for our role in the 1954-55 campaign. The certificate was presented at the school assemblies held on January 15, 16 and 17 at which time the film, "End of the Night," was shown.

PAGING SISTERHOOD!

MRS. FRANK SCHAEFFER, Editor

The interval between January 28 and February 28 has been dedicated to the observance of Jewish Music Month. It has been said, "A people who sings, lives; a people who lives, sings." Israel's music, from the earliest time, was influenced by its religious and social life, changing with the attitudes and conditions throughout the centuries. Jewish music is one of the foremost elements combined with prayers and books to make a Jewish home.

To recapture the accustomed place of honor for Jewish music our Center, Sisterhood, Young Married Group and Young Folks League have planned a very fine concert for your enjoyment on February 21. The Center is fortunate in having on its staff Mr. Sholom Secunda, who is in charge of this program. Let us all make a concerted effort to attend this unusual event. It will not only enrich our lives but will give us an opportunity to better appreciate our glorious musical heritage.

MOLLY MARKOWE,
President.

Observance of Jewish Book Month

Braving the winter winds, a staunch group of our members and their husbands attended the general meeting on Monday night, December 19th, and received a warm welcome extended from our president, Mrs. Markowe. Following the inspiring prayer given by Mrs. Pauline Brown, several announcements of coming events were made. Mrs. Syd Seckler, Chairman of Serve-a-Camp, reported on the important work done by this committee to bring cheer to our servicemen overseas, and Mrs. Clara Meltzer reported on Federation. Mrs. Markowe thanked all members who donated towards a page in tribute to her and our newly elected officers in the Journal, issued for the recent Center Dinner-Dance. She then presented Mrs. Beatrice Schaeffer, chairman of the program which followed.

In introducing our guest speaker, Rabbi Mordecai H. Lewittes, Mrs. Schaeffer recalled that she had recently been privi-

leged to present the Rabbi with a plaque in recognition of his eighteen years of outstanding service to the Center and to the community. "Eighteen is a significant number," said Mrs. Schaeffer. "It means Chai-life—and in his association with the Center Rabbi Lewittes has indeed imbued the Center with a new spirit of life."

The book, "Blessed Is The Land," by Louis Zara, was the subject of Rabbi Lewittes' talk. It is the story of the life of Asher Levy, one of the twenty-three original Jewish settlers to arrive in what was then called Nieuw Amsterdam. As Rabbi Lewittes reviewed the book, we learned that the rights that Asher Levy won were not only for the Jews but for the entire community because he fought for human rights. In the Rabbi's brilliant exposition of the book, a panorama of American history unfolded before us.

We were then introduced to the guest artist of the evening, Isaac Ostroik, concert violinist. Accompanied by Miss Shella Nan Markowe, he played several selections and thrilled us all by his brilliant performance. This program was truly one of the highlights of our very active season.

Cheer Fund

The following contributions have been received for our Cheer Fund:

Dr. and Mrs. Moses Spatt, in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Kotimsky's first grandchild; Mr. and Mrs. Alex Bernstein, in honor of a great-granddaughter; Mr. and Mrs. M. Robert Epstein, in honor of daughter Janet's induction into the Arista Society; Mr. and Mrs. Harry Green, in gratitude for their son's safe arrival in Guam with the armed forces; Dr. and Mrs. Samuel Elsberg, in honor of the arrival of their grandson, Elliott; Mr. and Mrs. Frank Schaeffer and Cantor and Mrs. Wm. Sauler, in memory of Mrs. Sholom Secunda's mother.

Mrs. Fanny Buchman, Chairman, will be glad to accept your donations to this Fund, which helps us "spread cheer" among the many needy organizations that appeal to us.

Federation of Jewish Philanthropies

Mrs. A. David Benjamin, over-all chairman, and Mrs. Julius Kushner, chairman, remind us that there is now a telephone at the Center for all workers of the Federation Committee. Please keep the 'phone busy, calling your prospects so that our campaign for this most worthy organization can be more successful than ever before. In serving its 116 Agencies, Federation also serves you.

Kiddush

A kiddush will be given to the Junior Congregation this Sabbath morning, January 28th by Mr. and Mrs. Philip Freedman in honor of the birth of their daughter. On February 4th the kiddush will be sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Markowe in honor of their daughter Shella Nan's betrothal.

Gift Shop

A new project has been added to our long list of activities. A permanent gift shop, containing jewelry, books, and many other articles to beautify your home and for gift-giving, is now open in the lobby of the Center. It is under the supervision of Mrs. Lilian Lowenfeld. This venture was initiated to serve the members of the Center, but more important, to introduce them to the many objects of Jewish symbolic and traditional value which will enhance the beauty of our homes. Take advantage of this Gift Shop.

United Jewish Appeal

The annual U.J.A. Rally will take place on Tuesday, February 14, 10:30 a.m., at the Sheraton-Astor Hotel. The program will include many prominent speakers as well as the stars of "Diary of Anne Frank," Joseph Schildkraut and Gusti Huber. There will be no solicitation of funds. By enrolling as a volunteer worker in this urgent campaign to aid our brethren in Israel, you too can secure tickets for this most inspiring event. Call Chairman Mrs. Rhea Zimmerman, at SL 6-5452, or Co-Chairman Mrs. Peggy Sonnenberg, PR 8-2457, for your tickets of admission to the Rally. Support the U.J.A. Campaign by attending this Rally.

Women's League News

The annual Spring Conference of the Brooklyn Branch of Women's League will take place on Wednesday, February 8, at

the Shaare Torah Community Center, Albemarle Rd. and E. 21st St. It will highlight Jewish Education for Sisterhood Women. Dr. Evelyn Garfiel, prominent educator and psychologist, will be the guest speaker. Subscription for the Conference, beginning at 9 a.m. when coffee will be served; luncheon at 12:30, and the morning and afternoon sessions, is \$2.50. Call Mrs. Markowe at PR 2-1287 for your reservations.

Luncheon For the Harold Hammers

Our Executive Board Meeting, on December 8, "marked a distinct departure from our usual meetings," said our president, Mrs. Molly Markowe. That meeting was set aside as a special tribute to our Administrative Director, Mr. Harold Hammer, who resigned his post here to assume the directorship of the Chizuk Amuno Congregation in Baltimore, and to his wife, Shirley. After an inspiring prayer delivered by Mrs. Fanny Buchman, a delicious luncheon prepared by Mrs. Sadie Kurtzman and her committee, was served. Following the luncheon, Mrs. Markowe read a letter from the office staff of the Center, who were represented in full force.

Rabbi Kretzman, one of the honored guests at the luncheon, observed that the Center is proving to be a "training school" for many of our personnel, whose exceptional abilities are recognized by other congregations throughout the country, and that we can take justifiable pride in our staff.

Mrs. Beatrice Schaeffer recalled that both she and Mr. Hammer began their "college" careers together four years ago at this "institution of higher learning," the Brooklyn Jewish Center, he as assistant to the late beloved Joseph Goldberg, of blessed memory, and she as president of Sisterhood. In presenting a gift of sterling silver candlesticks, Sisterhood's gift to the Hammers, Mrs. Schaeffer expressed the hope that "in the glow of the candlelight you will often see reflected the faces of your many Center friends who love you and will miss you."

Advance Dates

A Gala Music Festival in celebration of Jewish Music Month will be held at the Center on Tuesday evening, February 21st. Preceding the Concert, an Induction Ceremony will take place for all members of Sisterhood who joined during the past year.

The Annual Torah Fund Luncheon

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

DURING the past month, our club groups introduced a novel type of program called "paper bag dramatics." They spend many delightful hours in originating skits and playlets involving several unrelated objects. Mr. Herbert Levine, a member of the Young Married Group, introduced this idea and was personally on hand to assist the leaders and work with the youngsters. It is hoped that in due time a full scale dramatics project will evolve from these beginnings.

Our delegates to the National U.S.Y. Convention in Cleveland had the opportunity to report to their respective clubs. They summarized the proceedings at the numerous workshops, discussion groups and plenary sessions which they had attended. Above all, they impressed upon their club-mates the importance of living in a Jewish atmosphere and fulfilling with enthusiasm and spirit their responsibilities as Jewish youth.

Mr. Hyman Brickman, the Center's supervisor of youth activities, delivered a paper on programming at a special workshop of leaders at the convention. The United Synagogue Youth intends to publish his presentation.

On February 21, our teen-agers will participate in an inter-center sing at the East Midwood Jewish Center. Each competing group has selected a theme of its own choosing on a Jewish subject and has worked out the repertoire, scenery and staging. Mr. Sidney Gewirtz has joined our staff to direct this project. It is hoped that this will prepare the way for a permanent Jewish music project in our Youth Department.

will be held on Wednesday, March 14th, at the Center. A truly glamorous function is being planned. The Torah Fund Committee, consisting of Mrs. Sarah Kushner, "Chai Club" Chairman (for donors of \$18 and over), Mrs. Edna Krimsky, chairman, and co-chairmen Mrs. Esther Feit and Mrs. Luba Aminoff, are already working to make this affair more beautiful than ever. Subscription: \$6.11.

Purim arrives quite early this year, and so our clubs are already planning for the festivities. Through the coordination of the Youth Council, several special events are in the making, including a dance and a carnival. In terms of enjoyment and excitement, the festival this year will mean more than ever before to our youngsters.

Boys' Basketball News

The Senior and Junior basketball teams of the Brooklyn Jewish Center are in full swing. The boys are progressing and are exhibiting an improvement in their skills and team play. To date the Senior boys have won four and lost one. In their last game they overwhelmed their opponents by a score of 104-33; a record score. The Junior boys likewise have a good record, winning two, losing one.

The roster of the teams are as follows:

Senior boys: Artie Kaplan, Elihu Leifer, Joel Nisselman, Barry Heller, Marty Schwam, Bob Heller, Sandy Fenichel, Stan Fruchthandler, Jon Hirsch. Junior boys: Michael Blick, Alan Fishbein, Robert Crawford, Allen Rosenblum, Stan Wolfe, Richard Zeitz, Gary Wohl, Richard Moskowitz, John Moskowitz, Simon Milberg, Jerry Gold, Ernie Horowitz, Bruce Baron.

Library Open

The library, now in its new spacious quarters in the Lincoln Place building at the rear of the Center, is open for use. The schedule is: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 1:30 to 9:30 p.m.; Wednesday: 3:30 to 9:30 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Members are invited to use these facilities. Dr. E. N. Rabinowitz will be glad to fulfill any of your needs.

Calendar of Events

- Mon., Feb. 6: Sisterhood Executive Board Meeting—1:00 p.m.
- Wed., Feb. 8: Spring Conference of Brooklyn Branch, Women's League.
- Tues., Feb. 14: U.J.A. Rally at the Sheraton-Astor Hotel—10:30 a.m.
- Tues., Feb. 21: Gala Concert in Celebration of Jewish Music Month—8:30 p.m.

FIRST DINNER-DANCE ALL-AROUND SUCCESS

An aura of excitement mingled with delight permeated our Center on the memorable evening of Sunday, December 11th, as the Center's first annual Dinner-Dance was launched. As a fitting prelude to this glamorous affair, the more than three hundred members and guests attending the Reception, were served cocktails and hors d'oeuvres especially "designed" for this occasion. Amid the flashing of light-bulbs by the photographers taking pictures to record this event for posterity, we danced to the sprightly tunes of the orchestra conducted by our own Marvin Blickstein.

And then the procession began — the "grand march" to the flower-decked auditorium, to participate in the "preliminary events"—the kindling and blessing of the Hanukkah lights, with Cantor William Sauler leading in the singing of the anthems; an inspiring Invocation delivered by Rabbi Benjamin Kreitman, and finally, a banquet that was the pinnacle of perfection.

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In his brief introductory remarks, Mr. Harry Leventhal, chairman of the function, thanked the committee for its splendid cooperation and expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the hosts of men and women who all worked ceaselessly to "Serve Our Center Right" by bringing in ads for the beautiful Journal that was issued. Our genial chairman then introduced Dr. Moses Spatt, President of the Center, who declared that "the purposes of this function were three-fold: to provide an evening of sociability among our members; to pay tribute to our Honorary Presidents; and to raise the necessary funds to balance our budget so that we may continue to satisfy all the demands made upon us by the community." He then went on to extol the praises of our former presidents, all of whom brought renown and distinction to the Center.

In his greetings to us, our spiritual leader, Rabbi Israel Herbert Levinthal, expressed the hope that the spirit of good fellowship engendered at this affair would help to "kindle anew the holy flame that has been burning in this sanctuary for the last 36 years." "But," said Rabbi Levinthal, "we are only following an ancient precedent. When the very first syna-

gogue was dedicated the people conferred honor upon the 'Nesiym,' the princes of each tribe, to show their appreciation to the leaders who inspired them. We too were blessed with wonderful 'Nesiym,' our former presidents, and it is our privilege to honor them tonight."

As a "surprise" feature of the program, Rabbi Kreitman was again called upon. In his own inimitable, witty manner, he presented a gift from the Center to our Executive Director, Mr. Harold Hammer, who has since resigned his post here to assume the directorship of the Chizuk Amuno Congregation in Baltimore.

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We were entertained by the singing of Mrs. Jack Shutz, one of our own members, who rendered a medley of international songs with great poignancy and charm, after which Mr. Leventhal introduced, in turn, our three guests of honor, Mr. Samuel Rottenberg, Mr. Isidor Fine, and Judge Emanuel Greenberg. Each reviewed the history of the Center during his administration and as they reminisced, we could not but realize how fortunate we were to have had these stalwart leaders, these titans of religious and philanthropic endeavors, who have helped make our Center a citadel of spiritual strength throughout the country.

That the affair was a financial as well as a social success was evidenced by the fact that over \$30,000 was raised in ads and in personal contributions. The spontaneity of the occasion brought forth a generous donation of \$5,000 from one of our members, Mr. Israel Rogosin, to enhance the many activities of the Center.

In closing, Chairman Harry Leventhal again thanked his committee, consisting of Mr. Reuben Frieman, Journal Chairman, Mr. Harry Blickstein, Publicity Chairman, Mrs. Frank Schaeffer, Chairman of "outside" organizations meeting at the Center, as well as the groups within the Center family, Mr. Frank Schaeffer, Chairman of Seating Arrangements, and our Administrative Staff, and expressed his sincere thanks to all the men and women who worked so ardently to make this function outstandingly successful. Special thanks were also extended to Mr. Louis Kotimsky, our caterer, and to Mr.

By BEATRICE SCHAEFFER

Co-Chairman, Dinner-Journal Committee

Henry Spitz for his generous donations which made the floral decor beautiful to behold.

The "formal" program concluded with a solemn but meaningful Benediction pronounced by Rabbi Mordecai H. Lewittes, after which dancing continued far into the night.

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We would be remiss indeed, if we did not take this moment to express *our* gratitude and thanks to the one person who made this affair successful — our chairman, Mr. Harry Leventhal. His was an herculean task. He performed it nobly and well. We salute him for his vision, his courage, and his genuine spirit of dedication to our beloved Center.

This was a gay, glamorous and gala function; an occasion for the renewal of friendships; for the reunion of "old" and new members, and a forerunner, we hope, of annual get-togethers. It was an evening that will long be remembered in the annals of the history of the Brooklyn Jewish Center.

YOUNG MARRIED GROUP

THE meetings of the Young Married Group are held regularly on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. We urge all younger married members of the Center to attend our meetings and to participate more fully in our activities.

Members will shortly receive a letter from the group, and we urge that you send us a positive reply indicative of your interest.

Your suggestions and criticisms are welcome at all times because they help us to plan the type of meeting that will have the greatest appeal.

If you want to make new friends and learn more about the "young marrieds" in this community, our group is ready and willing to help you.

Contribute to

U. J. A.

MEDITERRANEAN JEWS

tion—from Greece, the Levant, and Italy. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Spanish migrants added to the numbers. There are thus layers of divergent cultures among the Jews of this island—Greek synagogues; Greek names such as Moustaki and Naxon; Spanish infiltrations and customs; Italic dialects. Each national group has its own synagogue and preserves its own antique body of mores.

In Rhodes—the mediaeval headquarters of the crusading Knights—Jews were crowded into a labyrinth of cube-shaped houses, next to the Turkish quarters. Their traditions run back to the second century before the Christian era. Their history, too, is closely knit with that of the secular history of the island. During the Crusades, under the Knights Hospitalers, the Jews were exiled. Benjamin de Tudela mentions the Rhodian community as flourishing, numbering some 500.

In 1937 the French Colonial Minister Marius Moutet suggested Madagascar as a settlement for victims of racial and political persecution by the Nazis. In the seventeenth century a French traveler—Flacourt—wrote of Jewish habitation on the island. The community—Zaffeh-Hibraham—which means the race of Abraham—practiced circumcision, celebrated the Sabbath, sacrificed cows, bulls, goats; knew, traditionally, that they had settled before the Babylonian captivity or that they were the descendants of those who remained in Egypt after the Exodus. Common names among them were Isaac, Joseph, Noah, Jacob. They knew of those names as belonging to the patriarchs; they had not heard of Jesus. Now radical and historical links with ancient Jewry have become blurred and weak.

Even in the islands of the Western Hemisphere the Jews sent their quotas, driven either by commercial enterprise or—as in the case of the Inquisition's victims—by forced migration. There are Jews consequently in Cuba, in Haiti, even in the obscure islands of the Caribbean.

In the Dutch West Indies is the island of Curacao, known for its thriving port of Willemstad. Sun-dried, the town still retains its Dutch flavor in steel-gabled houses, dormer windows, and general old-world air. The official language—Papiamento—is a mixture of Dutch, Indian,

(Continued from page 16)

English, Spanish, and Portuguese. There is considerable Jewish commerce here. Until the Nazis swarmed into Holland, orange skins were sent to that country to flavor the Curacao liqueur. Among the oldest and most prominent members of the Willemstad community—there is a population of about four hundred—are the Maduros, the Jewish banking family of Portuguese descent.

Martinique—in the French West Indies—had, early in the seventeenth century,

THE GRANDMOTHER

Doris comforted her. "My beautiful mama. You took such good care of us, you worked so hard, you lived through so much heartache. Now you come to us on the train with a tag on you like a piece of baggage."

Ellen's father saw her in the kitchen through the screen door and came in. He took Ellen's arm. "Well, how do you like the new grandmother?"

Her lip quivered. "I don't know," she blurted out. "I don't know."

How could she tell him about her dreadful, empty feeling, the wound of seeing how ugly and strange her grandmother was, unlike anyone she had ever known.

Her father patted her on the shoulder and was silent. Ellen wriggled away. She went into the dining room where her mother was now setting the table for coffee.

Was the grandmother alone? She wanted to look again.

She slipped into the living room. It was empty but for the grandmother. She sat where Ellen had seen her before and looked exactly the same except that she was staring passively out of the window. In her Aunt Anna's deep velour chair, she was colorless and small, like a frightened brown bird. When Ellen came in, she turned slowly to her.

Ellen moved closer. Shyly she studied her again. She found nothing new, only the same, odd mustiness, the apron still around the waist and the gnarled, featureless face covered with wrinkles.

The grandmother spoke. "Which one are you? Whose child are you?"

Ellen gasped with misery—her grand-

a colony of Dutch Jews. Repeated attempts were made, during that century, by the Jesuits, to drive them from Martinique and the smaller contiguous islands; but unsuccessfully. Toward the close of the century, however, Jews were expelled from the island. In the 18th century a return was permitted to the Jews. A French Jew of Bordeaux—which had commercial relations with the West Indies—a certain David Gradis, established a business branch at St. Pierre, in 1722.

(Continued from page 15)

mother didn't even remember her and she had anticipated a kindly, lively grandmother, a pink and white, tender grandmother. Again she had to try to keep from crying.

She looked again at her grandmother. She hadn't moved. The old woman said even more faintly, "I do not see very well. My memory is ruined. Whose are you?"

Ellen burst out crying. She fell on her knees and put her head in the musty, aproned lap. "I am Ada's child, grandmother," she said haltingly in the tongue of her mother, which she did not know very well. The dry old hand patted her head.

Again she seemed to hear her father say last night, "War, revolution, hunger, and persecution." Her grandmother had been destroyed even though she had escaped the gas chambers. Ellen grieved for her.

ENROLL YOUR FRIENDS IN THE BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER

Membership includes participation in cultural, religious, social and recreational activities.

A fully equipped gymnasium, a large swimming pool and massage services are at the disposal of members and their families.

Membership Rates

\$65 per year for married members

\$45 per year for single men

\$30 per year for girls

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The following have applied for membership in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

COHEN, MURRAY: Married; Res.: 61-07-251st St., Little Neck; Bus.: Carpet Installation.

DANIELS, SOL B.: Married; Res.: 131 E. 93rd St.; Bus.: Teacher, P.S. 50.

ENDLICH, JOHN: Single; Res.: 1045 St. Johns Pl.; *Proposed by* Abraham Seril.

FEINGOLD, MISS BEATRICE: Res.: 615 Ocean Ave.; *Proposed by* Harold Bleckner, W. Walter.

FISHER, SAMUEL: Married; Res.: 990 President St.; Bus.: Super Market, 822 Franklin Ave.; *Proposed by* Jacob Krohn.

GOLDBAUM, SHELDON: Single; Res.: 1562 Ocean Ave.; Bus.: Insurance, 15 Park Row.

KELMAN, DR. JEROME: Married; Res.: 522 Eastern Pkwy.; Bus.: Dentist; *Proposed by* Harold and Gerald Jacobs.

KLEIN, MISS ROSLYN: Res.: 253 E. 51st St.

SCHERTZ, LEON: Single; Res.: 1422 E. 3rd St.; Bus.: Sales Manager, Macy's Parkchester; *Proposed by* Irene Friedstein.

SEISER, MISS LENORE: Res.: 1961 E. 17th St.

SHAPIRO, JERRY: Single; Res.: 1225 Eastern Pkwy.

STEIN, MISS PAULA: Res.: 265 Rochester Ave.

WEINBERG, MISS IRMA R.: Res.: 828 Midwood St.

The following has applied for reinstatement:

FINK, BERNARD: Married; Res.: 599 Mohawk Rd., W. Hempstead; Bus.: Insurance, 1528 Pitkin Ave.

Additional Applications:

HIRSHON, MISS HARRIET: Res.: 514 East 51st St.; *Proposed by* Harold Kalb, Michael J. Rosenfeld.

CONRAD, DAVID: Single; Res.: 576 Eastern Parkway.

WOLPERT, BERNARD: Married; Res.: 427 Sterling St.; Bus.: C. P. A.; 110 West 42nd St

FRANK SCHAEFFER,
Chairman, Membership Committee.

To Members Planning Bar Mitzvahs

Members whose sons will be Bar Mitzvah during the next year are requested to reserve the date well in advance.

The following recommendations were accepted by the Board of Trustees and went into effect on January 1, 1955:

"Be it resolved that after January 1,

1955, no boy shall be Bar Mitzvah at the Saturday morning services unless he shall have at least one year's attendance at a regular (three day a week) Hebrew School or its equivalent. As of January 1, 1956, two years minimum Hebrew School attendance or its equivalent will be required. As of January 1, 1957, three years minimum Hebrew School attendance or its equivalent will be required.

"Be it further resolved that each candidate for Bar Mitzvah who does not have the above requirements shall pass a written examination to be administered by the Brooklyn Jewish Center or by one of its Rabbis."

In Memoriam

We announce with mournful sorrow the demise of

Louis Blankstein

of 762 St. Marks Avenue, one of our earliest members on January 17, 1956.

The Brooklyn Jewish Center extends heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and relatives.

Correction in Annual 1955-56 Diary

The 7th and 8th day of the Passover Holiday will be celebrated on Monday and Tuesday, April 2nd and 3rd, instead of as listed April 1st and 2nd. Yizkor will be recited on April 3rd.

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